Rule of law

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The rule of law is the political philosophy that all citizens and institutions within a country, state, or community are accountable to the same laws.

Quotes

(Alphabetical by author)

The rule of law, is ...the principle whereby all members of a society (including those in government) are considered equally subject to publicly disclosed legal codes and processes. ~ Oxford English Dictionary

B

- The Invariability of Law. That we live in a realm of law, that we are surrounded by laws that we cannot break, this is a truism. Yet when the fact is recognised in a real and vital way, and when it is seen to be a fact in the mental and moral world as much as in the physical, a certain sense of helplessness is apt to overpower us, as though we felt ourselves in the grip of some mighty Power, that, seizing us, whirls us away whither it will. The very reverse of this is in reality the case, for the mighty Power, when it is understood, will obediently carry us whither we will; all forces in Nature can be used in proportion as they are understood “Nature is conquered by obedience ” — and her resistless energies are at our bidding as soon as we, by knowledge, work with them and not against them. We can choose out of her boundless stores the forces that serve our purpose in momentum, in direction, and so on, and their very invariability becomes the guarantee of our success. P. 6
  - Annie Besant, Theosophical Manuals No IV: *Karma*, by Annie Besant (https://archive.org/details/TheosophicalManualsNoIVKarma) (1895)
- That law should be as invariable in the mental and moral worlds as in the physical is to be expected, since the universe is the emanation of the One, and what we call Law is but the expression of the Divine Nature. As there is one Life emanating all, so there is one Law sustaining all ; the worlds rest on this rock of the Divine Nature as on a secure, immutable foundation. P. 8

- Annie Besant, Theosophical Manuals No IV: *Karma*, by Annie Besant (https://archive.org/details/TheosophicalManualsNoIVKarma) (1895)

- Such is an outline of the great Law of Karma and of its workings, by a knowledge of which a man may accelerate his evolution, by the utilization of which a man may free himself from bondage, and become, long ere his race has trodden its course, one of the Helpers... of the World. A deep and steady conviction of the truth of this Law gives to life an immovable serenity and a perfect fearlessness: nothing can touch us that we have not wrought, nothing can injure us that we have not merited. And as everything that we have sown must ripen into harvest in due season, and must be reaped, it is idle to lament over the reaping when it is painful; it may as well be done now as at any future time, since it cannot be evaded, and, once done, it cannot return to trouble us again.

  - Annie Besant, *Karma*, (1895) Ch. XIII, P. 77 Conclusion

Only our own deeds can hinder us; only our own will can fetter us. Once let men recognize this truth, and the hour of their liberation has struck. Nature cannot enslave the Soul that by Wisdom has gained Power, and uses both in Love. ~ Annie Besant

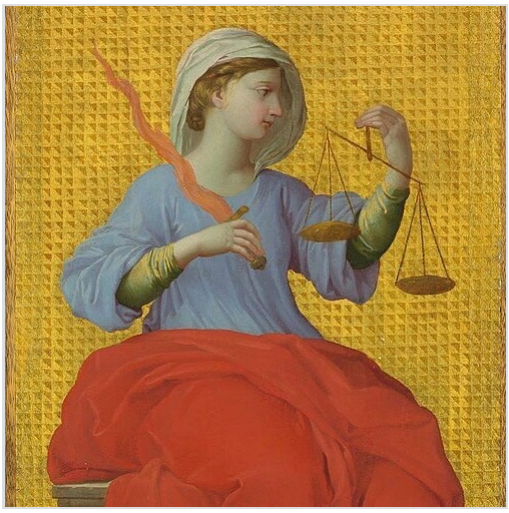
When a nation comes to adulthood, to maturity, it relates to other nations in a completely different way than hitherto. It begins to respect the Rule of Law, which binds all nations together in mutual responsibility and need. The sign of a growing maturity is precisely this respect for the laws which men have found necessary to living together in peace. ~ Benjamin Creme

C

- Under the Trump administration, aggressive rhetoric against the Venezuelan government has ratcheted up to a more extreme and threatening level, with Trump administration officials talking of “military action” and condemning Venezuela, along with Cuba and Nicaragua, as part of a “troika of tyranny.” Problems resulting from Venezuelan government policy have been worsened by US economic sanctions, illegal under the Organization of American States and the United Nations — as well as US law and other international treaties and conventions. These sanctions have cut off the means by which the Venezuelan government could escape from its economic recession, while causing a dramatic falloff in oil production and worsening the economic crisis, and causing many people to die because they can’t get access to life-saving medicines. Meanwhile, the US and other governments continue to blame [Nicolas Maduro and] the Venezuelan government — solely — for the economic damage, even that caused by the US sanctions.

  - Noam Chomsky, Laura Carlsen (https://therealnews.com/bios/laura-carlsen), Miguel Tinker Salas, Greg Grandin in **Open Letter by Over 70 Scholars and Experts to the United States: Condemns US-Backed Coup Attempt in Venezuela: Stop Interfering in Venezuela’s Internal Politics,** (https://therealnews.com/columns/an-open-letter-to-the-united-states-stop-interfering-in-venezuelas-internal-politics) (24 January 2019)

- Now the US and its allies... by recognizing National Assembly President Juan Guaido as the new president of Venezuela — something illegal under the OAS Charter — the Trump administration has sharply accelerated Venezuela's political crisis in the hopes of dividing the Venezuelan military and further polarizing the populace, forcing them to choose sides. The obvious, and sometimes stated goal, is to force Maduro out via a coup d'etat.
  - Noam Chomsky, Laura Carlsen (https://therealnews.com/bios/laura-carlsen), Miguel Tinker Salas, Greg Grandin in Open Letter by Over 70 Scholars and Experts to the United States: Condemns US-Backed Coup Attempt in Venezuela: Stop Interfering in Venezuela's Internal Politics, (https://therealnews.com/columns/an-open-letter-to-the-united-states-stop-interfering-in-venezuelas-internal-politics) (24 January 2019)



Karma — **Eastern name for the Law of Cause and Effect. The basic Law governing our existence** in this solar system. Every thought, every action that we have and make sets into motion a cause. These causes have their effects, which make our lives, for good or ill. Expressed in biblical terms: "As you sow, so shall you reap."; in scientific terms: "For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction." ~ Benjamin Creme, *Share International Glossary*

- By the time of Augustine (354-430 AD), the Roman Empire had become an Empire of lies. It still pretended to uphold the rule of law, to protect the people from the Barbarian invaders, to maintain the social order. But all that had become a bad joke for the citizens of an empire by then reduced to nothing more than a giant military machine dedicated to oppressing the poor in order to maintain the privileges of the rich. The Empire itself had become a lie: that it existed because of the favor of the Gods who rewarded the Romans because of their moral virtues. Nobody could believe in that anymore: it was the breakdown of the very fabric of society; the loss of what the ancient called the auctoritas, the trust that citizens had toward their leaders and the institutions of their state.
  - Noam Chomsky, Cassandra's Legacy, The Empire of Lies, February 8, 2016, quoted in A World of Total Illusion and Fantasy: Noam Chomsky on the Future of the Planet, Robert Hunziker, *CounterPunch* (https://www.counterpunch.org/2021/07/12/a-world-of-total-illusion-and-fantasy-an-interview-with-noam-chomsky/) (12 July 2021)
- **When a nation comes to adulthood, to maturity, it relates to other nations in a completely different way than hitherto. It begins to respect the Rule of Law, which binds all nations together in mutual responsibility and need.** The sign of a growing maturity is precisely this respect for the laws which men have found necessary to living together in peace. From time to time, a nation may feel powerful enough to ignore the law which irks its ambition to dominate, and to make war despite the warnings of restraint from its friends.
  - Benjamin Creme in *The ultimate triumph, Share International magazine*] (April 2004)
- A federal judge has breathed new life into questions surrounding former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton...and the 2012 attack that killed U.S. officials in **Benghazi, Libya.**...to reassure the American people their government remains committed to transparency and the rule of law...

- *Judge orders Susan Rice, other Obama officials to answer questions in Clinton email case Libya. William Cummings, USA TODAY* (https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2019/01/16/susan-rice-clinton-email-lawsuit/2592081002/) (16 January 2019)

The authority and influence of law in society, especially when viewed as a constraint on individual and institutional behavior; (hence) the principle whereby all members of a society (including those in government) are considered equally subject to publicly disclosed legal codes and processes. ~ The Oxford English Dictionary

G

- And so, Venezuela becomes a geopolitical battlefield. The country with the largest oil reserves on the planet... No matter what you may think of Nicolas Maduro, this sets a dangerous precedent for every country around the world. It is an absolute violation of international law, sovereignty and self-determination for foreign leaders to determine the presidents of other nations... It's a violation... Not just OAS charter, but also UN Charter and basic, fundamental tenets of international law, rights to sovereignty, self determination and non intervention...
  - Eva Golinger *Twitter* (https://twitter.com/evagolinger/status/1088169059919773696) (23 January 2019)
- The problem the Great Powers now faced (after world war II) was how to create a process that the world would consider something more than vengeance masquerading as righteousness, something more than "victors' justice." The solution was to demonstrate that their prosecutions had a basis in the Geneva Conventions and other international treaties -- in, that is, the already existing laws of war. In the process of designing those prosecutions, they consolidated and advanced the meaning and power of international law itself, a concept particularly needed in a postwar world of atomic weapons and a looming U.S.-Soviet conflict. Three-quarters of a century and many wars and weapon systems later, enforceable international law still remains humanity's best hope for adjudicating past war crimes and preventing future ones -- but only if great nations like the United States do not declare themselves exceptions to the rule of law.
  - *Tomgram: Rebecca Gordon, Turning Our Backs on Nuremberg,* (http://www.tomdispatch.com/blog/176543/) (26 March 2019)
- On March 18th, Rodrigo Duterte's Philippines became the second country to leave the ICC, where it, like the U.S., is being investigated for possible crimes -- in its case, against its own people. As the Washington Post reports, the country is "under preliminary examination [by the ICC] for thousands of [domestic drug war] killings since Duterte rose to the presidency in 2016."
  In its menacing rejection of the court, the Trump administration is turning its back on the system of international law and justice the United States helped establish at Nuremberg. The rule of law must not hold only, as hotelier Leona Helmsley once said about taxes, for "the little people." If Donald Trump had truly wanted to "make America great again," he would have recognized that international law is not just for the little countries. The greater a world power, the more consequential is its submission to the rule of law. The attacks of John Bolton and

Mike Pompeo on the ICC, however, simply represent a new spate of lawless actions from a lawless administration in an increasingly lawless era in Washington.

- *Tomgram: Rebecca Gordon, Turning Our Backs on Nuremberg,* (http://www.tomdispatch.com/blog/176543/) (26 March 2019)

H

- A Society that prohibits the capacity to speak in truth extinguishes the capacity to live in justice... the battle for Julian's liberty has always been much more than the persecution of a publisher. It is the most important battle for press freedom of our era. And if we lose this battle, it will be devastating, not only for Julian and his family, but for us... **Tyrannies invert the rule of law. They turn the law into an instrument of injustice. They cloak their crimes in a faux legality. They use the decorum of the courts and trials, to mask their criminality.**
  - Chris Hedges, Revisiting the case of Julian Assange and the reality of the "rule of law", *Salon* (https://www.salon.com/2021/06/15/revisiting-the-case-of-julian-assange-and-the-reality-of-the-rule-of-law/) (15 June 2021)
- Those such as Julian who expose that criminality to the public are dangerous, for without the pretext of legitimacy the tyranny loses credibility and has nothing left in its arsenal but fear, coercion and violence... The long campaign against Julian and WikiLeaks is a window into the collapse of the rule of law, the rise of what the political philosopher Sheldon Wolin calls our system of "inverted totalitarianism," a form of totalitarianism that maintains the fictions of the old capitalist democracy, including its institutions, iconography, patriotic symbols and rhetoric, but internally has surrendered total control to the dictates of global corporations.
  - Chris Hedges, Revisiting the case of Julian Assange and the reality of the "rule of law", *Salon* (https://www.salon.com/2021/06/15/revisiting-the-case-of-julian-assange-and-the-reality-of-the-rule-of-law/) (15 June 2021)
- What we are demanding on the political spectrum is in fact conservative: It is the restoration of the rule of law. It is simple and basic. It should not, in a functioning democracy, be incendiary. But living in truth in a despotic system is the supreme act of defiance. This truth terrifies those in power.
  The criminal ruling class has all of us locked in its death grip... It has abolished the rule of law. It obscures and falsifies the truth. It seeks the consolidation of its obscene wealth and power. And so, to quote the Queen of Hearts, metaphorically of course, I say, "Off with their heads."
  - Chris Hedges, Revisiting the case of Julian Assange and the reality of the "rule of law", *Salon* (https://www.salon.com/2021/06/15/revisiting-the-case-of-julian-assange-and-the-reality-of-the-rule-of-law/) (15 June 2021)
- **Our governments feel threatened by Chelsea Manning, Edward Snowden, and Julian Assange, because they are whistleblowers, journalists, and human rights activists who have provided solid evidence for the abuse, corruption, and war crimes of the powerful,** for which they are now being systematically defamed and persecuted. They are the political dissidents of the West, and their persecution is today's witch-hunt, because they threaten the privileges of unsupervised state power that has gone out of control.
  - PEN America and the Betrayal of Julian Assange (https://www.counterpunch.org/2021/12/29/pen-america-and-the-betrayal-of-julian-assange/), by Chris Hedges, *CounterPunch*,

(December 29, 2021)

- The cases of Manning, Snowden, Assange and others are the most important test of our time for the credibility of Western rule of law and democracy and our commitment to human rights. In all these cases, it is not about the person, the character or possible misconduct of these dissidents, but about how our governments deal with revelations about of their own misconduct.
  How many soldiers have been held accountable for the massacre of civilians shown in the video "Collateral Murder"? How many agents for the systematic torture of terror suspects? How many politicians and CEOs for the corrupt and inhumane machinations that have been brought to light by our dissidents? That's what this is about. It is about the integrity of the rule of law, the credibility of our democracies and, ultimately, about our own human dignity and the future of our children.
  - PEN America and the Betrayal of Julian Assange (https://www.counterpunch.org/2021/12/29/pen-america-and-the-betrayal-of-julian-assange/), by Chris Hedges, *CounterPunch*, (December 29, 2021)

- People today may believe that the men held in Guantanamo are "guilty" dangerous terrorists. But the majority of those still detained have never been charged and convicted of a crime. America's foundational belief in due process and the rule of law did not protect these men from being held in Guantanamo without charges. Nor did it protect them from torture. The rule of law also did not matter when the U.S. military purchased some of the men held in Guantanamo by paying bounties to Afghan and Pakistani soldiers.
  - Peter Jan Honigsberg (https://www.usfca.edu/law/faculty/peter-honigsberg) in *After 17 years, Guantanamo still erodes U.S. commitment to the rule of law, The Washington Post* (https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2019/01/11/after-years-guantanamo-still-erodes-us-commitment-rule-law/) (11 January 2019)

- The Deep State is reacting with shock at how this right-wing real estate grifter has been able to drive other countries to defend themselves by dismantling the U.S.-centered world order. To rub it in, he is using Bush and Reagan-era Neocon arsonists, John Bolton and now Elliott Abrams, to fan the flames in Venezuela. It is almost like a black political comedy. The world of international diplomacy is being turned inside-out. A world where there is no longer even a pretense that we might adhere to international norms, let alone laws or treaties. The Neocons who Trump has appointed are accomplishing what seemed unthinkable not long ago: Driving China and Russia together... They also are driving Germany and other European countries into the Eurasian orbit...
  - Michael Hudson in *Trump's Brilliant Strategy to Dismember U.S. Dollar Hegemony, CounterPunch,* (https://www.counterpunch.org/2019/02/01/trumps-brilliant-strategy-to-dismember-u-s-dollar-hegemony/) (1 February 2019)

- Any international system of control requires the **rule of law**. It may be a morally lawless exercise of ruthless power imposing predatory exploitation, but it is still The Law. And it needs courts to apply it (backed by police power to enforce it and punish violators). Here's the first legal contradiction in U.S. global diplomacy: The United States always has resisted letting any other country have any voice in U.S. domestic policies, law-making or diplomacy. That is what makes America "the exceptional nation." But for seventy years its diplomats have pretended that its superior judgment promoted a peaceful world (as the Roman Empire claimed to be)...
  - Michael Hudson in *Trump's Brilliant Strategy to Dismember U.S. Dollar Hegemony,*

CounterPunch, (https://www.counterpunch.org/2019/02/01/trumps-brilliant-strategy-to-dismember-u-s-dollar-hegemony/) (1 Feb 2019)

- Donald Trump's National Security Adviser **John Bolton erupted in fury**, warning in September that: "The United States will use any means necessary to protect our citizens and those of our allies from unjust prosecution by this illegitimate court," adding that the UN International Court must not be so bold as to investigate "Israel or other U.S. allies." That prompted a senior judge, Christoph Flügge from Germany, to resign in protest... The original inspiration of the Court – to use the Nuremburg laws that were applied against German Nazis to bring similar prosecution against any country or officials found guilty of committing war crimes – had already fallen into disuse with the failure to indict the authors of the Chilean coup, Iran-Contra or the U.S. invasion of Iraq for war crimes.
  - Michael Hudson in *Trump's Brilliant Strategy to Dismember U.S. Dollar Hegemony, CounterPunch,* (https://www.counterpunch.org/2019/02/01/trumps-brilliant-strategy-to-dismember-u-s-dollar-hegemony/) (1 Feb 2019)

J

- The Iraq invasion bypassed the laws and protocols for military action laid out in the founding charter of the United Nations. The current U.S. military occupation of Syria violates international law. **International law only exists to the extent to which the nations of the world are willing and able to enforce it, and because of the U.S. empire's military power — and more importantly because of its narrative control power — this means international law is only ever enforced with the approval of that empire.**
  This is why the people indicted and detained by the International Criminal Court (ICC) are always from weaker nations — overwhelmingly African — while the USA can get away with actually sanctioning ICC personnel if they so much as talk about investigating American war crimes... It is also why Noam Chomsky famously said that **if the Nuremberg laws had continued to be applied with fairness and consistency, then every post-WWII U.S. president would have been hanged.**
  - Caitlin Johnstone: International Law Becomes Meaningless When Applied Only to US Enemies (https://consortiumnews.com/2022/03/17/caitlin-johnstone-international-law-becomes-meaningless-when-applied-only-to-us-enemies/), *Consortium News*, March 17, 2022
- U.S. law professor Dale Carpenter has said, **"If citizens cannot trust that laws will be enforced in an evenhanded and honest fashion, they cannot be said to live under the rule of law. Instead, they live under the rule of men corrupted by the law."**
  This is all the more true of laws which would exist between nations. You don't get to make international law meaningless and then claim that an invasion is "illegal." That's not a legitimate thing to do. As long as we are living in a Wild West environment created by a murderous globe-spanning empire which benefits from it, claims about the legality of foreign invasions are just empty sounds.
  - Caitlin Johnstone: International Law Becomes Meaningless When Applied Only to US Enemies (https://consortiumnews.com/2022/03/17/caitlin-johnstone-international-law-becomes-meaningless-when-applied-only-to-us-enemies/), *Consortium News*, March 17, 2022

L

- We are concerned about what the US and its closest allies are doing with respect to Venezuela, brazenly violating all imaginable norms of international law and actually openly pursuing the policy aimed at overthrowing the legitimate government in that Latin American country... Together with other responsible members of the international community, we will do everything to support President Maduro's legitimate government in upholding the Venezuelan constitution and employing methods to resolve the crisis that are within the constitutional framework... We would like to figure out what the international community could do to prevent another blatant violation of international law and violent regime change... This is what I discussed yesterday with the Iranian foreign minister, who - just like us - wants to find an opportunity for external players to prove themselves useful to the Venezuelan people.
  - Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov in **US policy aimed at toppling Venezuela's government, TASS** (http://tass.com/politics/1042235) (29 January 2019)

M

- The problems with Russia are not just NATO expansion. There were also a process that began with the second Bush administration of withdrawing from all of the arms control — almost all of the arms control agreements that we had concluded with the Soviet Union, the very agreements that had brought the first Cold War to an end.... In effect, what the United States did after the end of the Cold War was they reversed the diplomacy that we had used to end the Cold War, and started sort of doing anything, everything the opposite way. We started, in effect, trying to control other countries, to bring them into what we called the "new world order," but it was not very orderly. And we also sort of asserted the right to use military whenever we wished. We bombed Serbia in the '90s without the approval of the U.N. Later, we invaded Iraq, citing false evidence and without any U.N. approval and against the advice not only of Russia but of Germany and France, our allies. So, the United States — I could name a number of others — itself was not careful in abiding by the international laws that we had supported.
  - Jack F. Matlock Jr., Ex-U.S. Ambassador to USSR: Ukraine Crisis Stems Directly from Post-Cold War Push to Expand NATO (https://www.democracynow.org/2022/2/17/jack_matlock_ukraine_russia_nato_us), *Democracy Now!*, February 17, 2022
- Cooperation must be based upon sound rules. This teaches orderliness; that is, it helps the acquirement of a rhythm. Thus even in daily work are expressed the great laws of the Universe. It is especially needed to become accustomed from childhood to continuous labor. Let the better evolution be built upon labor as the measure of value. Labor must be voluntary. Cooperation must be voluntary.
  - Morya, *New Era Community* (1926)

N

- Many Senate Democrats are throwing in the towel on the nomination of William Barr for Trump's attorney general. One would think that Senate Democrats would be appalled at Barr's long-time unyielding conduct and writings asserting that the President can start any wars he wants even if Congress votes against it! An example of this is the constitutionally undeclared criminal invasion of Iraq by George W. Bush. Barr was also George H.W. Bush's Attorney General and has been a long-time defender of executive branch lawlessness. One would think that Barr's insupportable drive for more corporate prisons and more mass incarceration would

upset these Senators... Expect the further decay of a Department of Injustice, shielding a chronically lawless President and turning the rule of law on its head.

- Ralph Nader in *Democrats may be surrendering the rule of law, Alternet* (https://www.alternet.org/2019/01/ralph-nader-democrats-may-be-surrendering-the-rule-of-law/) (19 January 2019)

R

- The bottom line is that Russia has set forth a cognizable claim under the doctrine of anticipatory collective self defense, devised originally by the U.S. and NATO, as it applies to [[w:Chapter_VII_of_the_United_Nations_Charter#Article_51| (Charter of the United Nations) Article 51]] which is predicated on fact, not fiction. While it might be in vogue for people, organizations, and governments in the West to embrace the knee-jerk conclusion that Russia's military intervention constitutes a wanton violation of the United Nations Charter and, as such, constitutes an illegal war of aggression, the uncomfortable truth is that, of all the claims made regarding the legality of pre-emption under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, Russia's justification for invading Ukraine is on solid legal ground.
  - Scott Ritter, Russia, Ukraine & the Law of War: Crime of Aggression (https://consortiumnews.com/2022/03/29/russia-ukraine-the-law-of-war-crime-of-aggression/)], *Consortium News*, March 29, 2022
- I can attest with full confidence that the **United States** no longer has a rule of law. The USA is a lawless country. By that I do not mean what conservative Republicans mean, which is, if I understand them, that racial minorities violate law with something close to impunity. What I mean is that only the mega-banks and the One Percent have legal protection, and that is because these people control the government. For everyone else law is a weapon in the hands of the government to be used against the American people.... American justice is a joke. It does not exist. You can see this in the American prison population. "Freedom and Democracy" America not only has the largest percentage of its population in prison than any country on the planet, but also the largest number of prisoners. If you consider that "authoritarian" China has four times the population of the United States but fewer prisoners, you understand that "authoritarian" China has a more protective rule of law than the United States. Compared to "freedom and democracy America," Russia has hardly anyone in prison. Yet, Washington and its media whores have defined the President of Russia as "the new Hitler."
  - Paul Craig Roberts *The Rule Of Law No Longer Exists In Western Civilization, Global Research* (https://www.globalresearch.ca/the-rule-of-law-no-longer-exists-in-western-civilization/5499530) (6 January 2016)
- Before I begin, I hope you will allow me a personal reference. Throughout all of the painstaking proceedings of this committee, I as the chairman have been guided by a simple principle, the principle that the law must deal fairly with every man. For me, this is the oldest principle of democracy. It is this simple, but great principle which enables man to live justly and in decency in a free society. It is now almost fifteen centuries since the Emperor Justinian, from whose name the word "justice" is derived, established this principle for the free citizens of Rome. Seven centuries have now passed since the English barons proclaimed the same principle by compelling King John, at the point of the sword, to accept a great doctrine of Magna Carta, the doctrine that the king, like each of his subjects, was under God and the law. Almost two centuries ago the Founding Fathers of the United States reaffirmed and refined this principle so

that here all men are under the law, and it is only the people who are sovereign. So speaks our Constitution, and it is under our Constitution, the supreme law of our land, that we proceed through the sole power of impeachment. We have reached the moment when we are ready to debate resolutions whether or not the Committee on the Judiciary should recommend that the House of Representatives adopt articles calling for the impeachment of Richard M. Nixon. Make no mistake about it. This is a turning point, whatever we decide. Our judgment is not concerned with an individual but with a system of constitutional government.

- Peter W. Rodino Jr., as quoted in Stathis, S. W. (2009). Impeachment of president richard m. nixon ∗ 1974 ∗. In *Landmark debates in Congress: From the declaration of independence to the war in Iraq* (pp. 415-426). CQ Press,

U

- The rule of law could never be realized if States continued to threaten and disrupt the internal affairs of others, support extremists abroad, and apply unilateral sanctions, **Syria**'s delegate told the Sixth Committee (Legal) (at the United Nations General Assembly meeting) as it concluded its debate on the rule of law and began consideration... on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization. Syria was experiencing an unimaginable situation, continued that country's delegate, borne out of calls for legal reform. He decried the unilateral sanctions that had harmed his country's citizens and demanded that States offering a haven to, and arming and financing terrorists to stop. He urged that the calls by Syria's authorities to return to the rule of law be heard.
  - *Syria Calls for Application of Rule of Law in 'Unimaginable' Situation Facing Country, as Sixth Committee Concludes Rule of Law Debate, UN Meetings Coverage and Press Releases* (https://www.un.org/press/en/2012/gal3437.doc.htm) (11 October 2012)
- Theodor Meron, President of the *International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals,* said he had been 9 years old when Nazi Germany invaded Poland, the country of his birth. Most of his family had been killed by the Nazis because they were Jews. When the war ended, he had emerged lucky to be alive, but profoundly affected by his experiences. While his career had followed a circuitous path, the abiding focus had been to grapple with the brutality of war, and to strive to find ways to end the horrific atrocities committed during armed conflict. Central to any such effort was the need to ensure respect for and adherence to international law, and the humanitarian principles and values of human rights and dignity reflected therein....As for the (UN Security) Council, it must serve as a model. The rule of law hinged on consistency and equality of enforcement; it abhorred selectivity. If one situation involving alleged atrocity crimes was treated with all due attention, and another left to linger in decision-making limbo, the values underpinning the rule of law would be undermined.
  - UN, *Security Council Must Rectify Failure to Prohibit Use of Force, Maintain International Peace, Speakers Stress in Day-long Debate, UN Security Council 8262nd Meeting (AM)* (https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/sc13344.doc.htm) (17 May 2018)
- UNDP (**United Nations Development Programme**) provides comprehensive rule of law and human rights assistance to support national partners build resilient communities. UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner emphasized that **the rule of law** is not only about guaranteeing rights, but is an enabler of good governance and sustainable development. He further discussed how strengthening the rule of law is an integral part of UNDP's work...
  - *The Rule of Law and Human Rights - Fundamentals for the 2030 Agenda and Sustaining*

Peace, UNDP (http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/news-centre/news/2018/the-rule-of-law-and-human-rights---fundamentals-for-the-2030-age.html) (22 June 2018)

- "The situation (in Libya) is utterly dreadful," said Michelle Bachelet on Thursday, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. "Tackling the rampant impunity would not only end the suffering of tens of thousands of migrant and refugee women, men and children seeking a better life, but also undercut the parallel illicit economy built on the abuse of these people and help establish **the rule of law** and national institutions."
  - *UN report sheds light on 'unimaginable horrors' faced by migrants and refugees in Libya, and beyond, UN News* (https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/12/1029031)(20 December 2018)
- **Iran's** representative Gholamali Khoshroo: Multilateralism is under attack while unilateralism is getting crystallized, said that the United States, a permanent member of the Security Council and holder of the veto power, is penalizing nations across the entire world, not for violating a Security Council resolution but for abiding by it. In May, the current administration of that country withdrew from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (the Iran nuclear deal) and is now targeting the countries that continue their economic ties with Iran in accordance with their obligations under Security Council resolution 2231 (2015).
  - UN, *Developing Rule of Law...UN Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, General Assembly* (https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/gal3570.doc.htm) (9 October 2018)
- Sanctions which can lead to starvation and medical shortages are not the answer to the crisis in Venezuela, says UN human rights expert Idriss Jazairy. "I am especially concerned to hear reports that these sanctions are aimed at changing the government of Venezuela... Coercion, whether military or economic, must never be used to seek a change in government in a sovereign state. The use of sanctions by outside powers to overthrow an elected government is in violation of all norms of international law... His call echoed comments by the Spokesman for the UN Secretary General, underscoring "the urgent need for all relevant actors to engage in an inclusive and credible political dialogue to address the long crisis facing the country, with full respect for the rule of law and human rights". The expert drew attention to the UN Declaration on the Principles of International Law concerning friendly relations and cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, which urges States to resolve their differences through dialogue and peaceful relations, and to avoid the use of economic, political or other measures to coerce another State in regard to the exercise of its sovereign rights.
  - United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights **Venezuela sanctions harm human rights of innocent people, UN expert warns,** (https://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24131&LangID=E) (31 January 2019)

V

- What becomes of the rule of law when the decisions of a Supreme Court are ignored by the Legislature? These legal processes are being ignored by... the right-wing governments of the region that shamelessly carry out orders from Washington and vilify Venezuela... Venezuela should be lauded for defending the rule of law, not tarred with malicious fake news. But its government is sitting on top of the Hemisphere's largest oil reserves and it repudiates the policies of the cannibalistic neo-liberal capitalism.
  - Maria Paez Victor (https://www.counterpunch.org/author/pu3tatre/) in *Fake News: Venezuela Upholds Rule of Law, But Press Calls It Dictatorship, CounterPunch* (https://ww

w.counterpunch.org/2017/03/31/fake-news-venezuela-upholds-rule-of-law-but-press-calls-it-dictatorship/) (31 March 2017)

W

- Of course, every state may defend itself, under some circumstances even before an armed attack aimed at it has landed on its territory. But the attack must be imminent, leaving no choice of means and the response must be proportionate to the attack. In the run-up to the Iraq war of 2003, there was the famous 45-minute claim concerning Iraq's supposed weapons of mass destruction.... the UK argued that **Iraqi** weapons of mass destruction might reach UK military bases... But **there was no evidence** that Baghdad was contemplating such an attack and the argument was abandoned. **Similarly**, there is no suggestion in this instance that **Syria** was preparing to launch an attack against the US, UK or France.
  - Marc Weller in *Syria air strikes: Were they legal?* (https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-43766556) (14 April 2018)

See also

- Atonement
- Charter of the United Nations
- Consequences
- Corruption
- Crimes against humanity
- Crimes Against Humanity Initiative
- Diplomacy
- Etiquette
- International Criminal Court
- International law
- Justice
- Karma (the Law of Cause and Effect)
- Law
- Law enforcement
- Manners
- Morality
- Prison
- Punishment
- Reincarnation
- Remorse
- Repentance
- Vicarious atonement
- War crimes

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